This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A process for producing plastic/wood fiber composite foamed structures comprising the steps of:

pre-drying wood fiber filler having a degradation temperature and an active volatization temperature and maintaining the pre-drying temperature below the degradation temperature to produce dried wood fiber filler;

mixing the dried wood fiber filler with plastic to produce a plastic/wood fiber mixture and maintaining the mixing temperature below the active volatilizing temperature;

feeding the plastic/wood fiber mixture into an extruder and maintaining the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber mixture below the active volatilizing temperature;

introducing a blowing agent into the plastic/wood fiber mixture and mixing it therewith to produce a plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture and maintaining the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture below the active volatilizing temperature;

subjecting the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture to high shear forces in the presence of high pressures and maintaining the <u>a processing temperature</u> below the active volatilizing temperature; and

extruding the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture to produce a plastic/wood fiber composite foamed structure and maintaining the temperature of the plastic/wood

fiber/gas mixture below the active volatilizing temperature.

- 2. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the pre-drying temperature is between the active volatilization temperature and the degradation temperature.
- 3. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the pre-drying temperature is below 180°C.
- 4. (original) A process as claimed in claim 3 wherein the mixing temperature is below 170°C.
- 5. (original) A process as claimed in claim 4 wherein the processing temperature is below 170°C.
- 6. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the mixing temperature is below 170°C.
- 7. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the processing temperature is below 170°C.
- 8. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the blowing agent is volatiles devolved from the wood fiber during the mixing step and the subjecting step.

- 9. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the blowing agent is a physical blowing agent.
- 10. (previously presented) A process as claimed in claim 9 wherein the physical blowing agent is selected from the group consisting of non-reactive gases CO₂, N₂, He, Ar, Air, and mixtures thereof.
- 11. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the blowing agent is a chemical blowing agent.
- 12. (original) A process as claimed in claim 5 wherein the blowing agent is volatiles devolved from the wood fiber during the mixing step and the subjecting step.
- 13. (original) A process as claimed in claim 5 wherein the blowing agent is a physical blowing agent.
- 14. (previously presented) A process as claimed in claim 13 wherein the physical blowing agent is selected from the group consisting non-reactive gases CO₂, N₂, He, Ar, Air, and mixtures thereof.
- 15. (original) A process as claimed in claim 5 wherein the blowing agent is a

chemical blowing agent.

- 16. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 further including the step of reducing the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture prior to the step of extruding thereby stabilizing the cell structure in the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture.
- 17. (original) A process as claimed in claim 16 wherein the temperature is reduced in one of a cooling extruder and a heat exchanger.
- 18. (original) A process as claimed in claim 5 further including the step of reducing the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture prior to the step of extruding thereby stabilizing the cell structure in the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture.
- 19. (original) A process as claimed in claim 18 wherein the temperature is reduced in one of a cooling extruder and a heat exchanger.
- 20. (original) A process as claimed in claim 8 further including the step of reducing the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture prior to the step of extruding thereby stabilizing the cell structure in the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture.
- 21. (original) A process as claimed in claim 20 wherein the temperature is reduced in one of a cooling extruder and a heat exchanger.
- 22. (original) A process as claimed in claim 9 further including the step of reducing

the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture prior to the step of extruding thereby stabilizing the cell structure in the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture.

- 23. (original) A process as claimed in claim 22 wherein the temperature is reduced in one of a cooling extruder and a heat exchanger.
- 24. (original) A process as claimed in claim 11 further including the step of reducing the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture prior to the step of extruding thereby stabilizing the cell structure in the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture.
- 25. (original) A process as claimed in claim 24 wherein the temperature is reduced in one of a cooling extruder and a heat exchanger.
- 26. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the extruder includes cascade devolatization having a first cascade extruder and a second cascade extruder.
- 27. (original) A process as claimed in claim 26 wherein the first cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder and the second cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 28. (original) A process as claimed in claim 5 wherein the extruder includes cascade devolatization having a first cascade extruder and a second cascade extruder.

- 29. (original) A process as claimed in claim 28 wherein the first cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder and the second cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 30. (original) A process as claimed in claim 8 wherein the extruder includes cascade devolatization having a first cascade extruder and a second cascade extruder.
- 31. (original) A process as claimed in claim 30 wherein the first cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder and the second cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 32. (original) A process as claimed in claim 9 wherein the extruder includes cascade devolatization having a first cascade extruder and a second cascade extruder.
- 33. (original) A process as claimed in claim 32 wherein the first cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder and the second cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 34. (original) A process as claimed in claim 11 wherein the extruder includes cascade devolatization having a first cascade extruder and a second cascade extruder.
- 35. (original) A process as claimed in claim 34 wherein the first cascade extruder is

one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder and the second cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.

- 36. (original) A process as claimed in claim 16 wherein the extruder includes cascade devolatization having a first cascade extruder and a second cascade extruder.
- 37. (original) A process as claimed in claim 37 wherein the first cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder and the second cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 38. (original) A process as claimed in claim 18 wherein the extruder includes cascade devolatization having a first cascade extruder and a second cascade extruder.
- 39. (original) A process as claimed in claim 38 wherein the first cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder and the second cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 40. (original) A process as claimed in claim 20 wherein the extruder includes cascade devolatization having a first cascade extruder and a second cascade extruder.
- 41. (original) A process as claimed in claim 40 wherein the first cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder and the second cascade

extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.

- 42. (original) A process as claimed in claim 22 wherein the extruder includes cascade devolatization having a first cascade extruder and a second cascade extruder.
- 43. (original) A process as claimed in claim 42 wherein the first cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder and the second cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 44. (original) A process as claimed in claim 24 wherein the extruder includes cascade devolatization having a first cascade extruder and a second cascade extruder.
- 45. (original) A process as claimed in claim 44 wherein the first cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder and the second cascade extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 46. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 47. (original) A process as claimed in claim 5 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.

- 48. (original) A process as claimed in claim 8 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 49. (original) A process as claimed in claim 9 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 50. (original) A process as claimed in claim 11 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 51. (original) A process as claimed in claim 16 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 52. (original) A process as claimed in claim 18 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 53. (original) A process as claimed in claim 20 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 54. (original) A process as claimed in claim 22 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 55. (original) A process as claimed in claim 24 wherein the extruder is one of a twin

screw extruder and a single screw extruder.

- 56. (original) A process as claimed in claim 26 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 57. (original) A process as claimed in claim 28 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 58. (original) A process as claimed in claim 30 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 59. (original) A process as claimed in claim 32 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 60. (original) A process as claimed in claim 34 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 61. (original) A process as claimed in claim 36 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 62. (original) A process as claimed in claim 38 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.

- 63. (original) A process as claimed in claim 40 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 64. (original) A process as claimed in claim 42 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 65. (original) A process as claimed in claim 44 wherein the extruder is one of a twin screw extruder and a single screw extruder.
- 66. (currently amended) A process for producing plastic/wood fiber composite foamed structures comprising the steps of:

pre-drying wood fiber filler to produce dried wood fiber filler;

mixing the dried wood fiber filler with plastic to produce a plastic/wood fiber mixture and maintaining the mixing temperature below the active volatizing temperature;

feeding the plastic/wood fiber mixture into an extruder and maintaining the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber mixture below the active volatizing temperature;

mixing a physical blowing agent into the plastic/wood fiber mixture to produce a plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture and maintaining the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture below the active volatilizing temperature;

subjecting the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture to high shear forces in the presence

of high pressures and maintaining a processing temperature below the active volatilizing temperature; and

extruding the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture to produce a plastic/wood fiber composite foamed structure and maintaining the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture below the active volatilizing temperature.

- 67. (original) A process as claimed in claim 66 further including the step of reducing the temperature of the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture prior to the step of extruding thereby stabilizing the cell structure in the plastic/wood fiber/gas mixture.
- 68. (previously presented) A process as claimed in claim 67 wherein the physical blowing agent is selected from the group consisting of CO_2 and N_2 .